Talking to a Member of Parliament.

A member of parliament was a passenger on one of the west end buses on Friday and asked the conductor to let him down at a point outside the house of commons where omnibuses, for the better convenience of members of parliament crossing the road into Palace yard, are not allowed to stand. The conductor accordingly refused to stop, whereupon the member, who, of course, was not known as such, became rather indignant and insisted on the horses being pulled up in order to allow him to dismount.

The conductor bore his ill tempered complaints for a moment or two and then suddenly silenced him with the crushing retort, "Look here, mister, if it's a fight yer wants, cut across to the house of commons." The conductor was just a little astonished when he discovered that he had made his admirable suggestion to an actual member of that illustrious assembly.—Cor. Leeds Mercury.

Electric Street Railways In Europe.

Electric street railways have met with approval in Paris, where two lines run on the storage battery principle are now in operation. The system, however, is not altogether approved of, chiefly on account of the dead weight of the accumulators, and there are a very large number of engineers who advocate the Siemens system of underground contact, which was first adopted at Buda-Pesth in 1889. It is believed that this method will in the future be very generally used to the exclusion of accumulators and probably the trolley. This latter system has been chosen for the new line at Havre. All animal power for tramway purposes in that town is to be suppressed, and a contract for the substitution of electric power has already been given.

A Sultan's Kind Reply.

The sultan of Morocco is so often rude and unmannerly to strangers that I take pleasure in recording here the kindly way in which he received the request of a German prince who some years ago came to Tangier for his health. He was suffering from rheumatism and brought with him his equipages. The first day he attempted to drive up and down the Malabar beach he was stopped by the soldiers and forbidden to drive any farther again in the city. He immediately appealed to the sultan, who wrote back the following answer and had it dispatched from Fez to Tangier by a particularly swift courier: Yes, he would be delighted to have this stranger prince drive about his city of Tangier, and he gave him permission so to do, but with one condition. Every time he drove abroad he would please take the wheels off his carriage, otherwise he might run over and seriously hurt some of the little children in the streets.—Stephen Bonsal in Century.

Edwin Booth's Generosity.

The late Edwin Booth's unostentatious generosity was exemplified in a characteristic way when the birthday of his physician came around. This physician, in addition to having been unremitting in his attention to the tragedian's physical condition, was his friend. At a little supper given in honor of the occasion a magnificent punch bowl was brought in and set before the doctor. He read the inscription, which stated the name of the donor, and was about to thank Mr. Booth, when the latter quietly suggested that the cover be taken off. It was done, and a check for $1,500 was found inside.

"That's to make the punch with," said Mr. Booth, with a smile.

The punch bowl had cost $1,200.—New York Herald.

One Fact About the Truth.

The great advantage of the truth is that you didn't make it, and so are not in any way responsible for it. It can take care of itself, or, if not, so much the worse for the facts. It is very strange that among the arguments in favor of truth telling enumerated in books for the young no one has ever thought to bring out this one of its superior labor saving qualities.—Kate Field's Washington.

THE AMERICAN "DRUMMER."

Child of the Bagman of Former Years, but Greater Than His Parent.

The commercial traveler of the United States illustrates the growth and extension and improvement and elevation of the world and humanity. Genealogically he is decended from the bagman of the last century, who figures in so many stories. He who traveled on horseback selling goods by sample, as distinguished from the peddler who sold the articles themselves. The bagman, deriving his title from his saddlebags, represented the extension of commerce and the growth of manufactures. He effected the direct connection between the wholesaler and the retailer; between the port and the interior; between the centers of commerce and the manufactures and the widespread country. He was the embassador—the missionary of trade.

With the coming of railroads and steamboats the horseback traveler and his saddlebags gradually disappeared, and so the name bagman went out of use. The original labors of this disseminator of trade were greatly increased in this country, and from the fact that his business was to vigorously solicit business with an energy like that of the "alarming drum" came the appellation "drummer," still in use, but with the increasing magnitude, and, as may be said, the increasing dignity of his operations, came a yet more comprehensive designation, and the bagman of old became the commercial traveler of today, as much greater than his commercial ancestor as a locomotive is in power than a horse, and as the colossal sample trunk of the nineteenth century is to the saddlebags of the eighteenth.

The commercial traveler, mustering by thousands, is now a great factor and feature in American business and social life. The value and necessity of the commercial traveler have been so fully demonstrated that there is no longer any talk of dispensing with him. As every religion must have its preachers, so commerce, trade, business, must have its speaking ministers and agents, its "stumpers," solicitors and orators. The spirit of organization which distinguishes the century has reached the commercial travelers. They form a great society, and they have divided and subdivided the land among them. Incessantly traveling, they have directly and indirectly regulated lines and facilities of travel. Every railroad line has felt their influence, and they have raised the hotel standard of the country.

The commercial traveler, being an American citizen and usually a voter, is necessarily a politician, and if he does not control elections (and he has been known to do that) he becomes a good judge as to how the election is going. He moves about among the people and becomes a "people's man." He is an authority on popular events and questions. He connects distant communities, fosters the exchange of ideas, carries the news and cherishes the brotherhood of man.—Kansas City Star.

Tramps and Their Families.

Only 7.3 per cent of 1,239 enumerated tramps are now married, while 4.4 per cent more are widowers. Their total of children is 215, or considerably less than 2 to a marriage. What has been well described as the bond which a man gives to society for his good behavior is therefore almost wholly lacking here, and even when given it is generally forfeited, in so many instances have wife and children drifted out of the tramp's sight.

Thus in only 2 cases were wife and children in the same town with the man questioned. In 29 they were in the same state. In 30 in another state. In 9 in a foreign country. In 8 the wife was dead and the children were unknown. In 16 the wife was dead and the children were in another state or country. What a picture of desolation, however viewed!—Professor J. J. McCook in Forum.

The Swell Idea.

There are two sisters in Detroit about as unlike as two sisters could be. One is a democratic young woman who likes people for themselves, while the other is painfully exclusive and will have nothing to do with man or woman who has not the proper social brand.

"I do believe," said the democratic one the other day, "that you would rather be 'swell' than be an angel."

"Certainly I would," replied the other, "for any one who is good can be an angel, but it requires a great deal more than that to be swell."—Detroit Free Press.

Charcoal Filters.

The English claim that filters of sponge, sand or loose charcoal are only partial in their results. They prefer a porous block of pure (animal) charcoal, combining the highest known chemical with the greatest possible mechanical or straining capacity. Every soldier in hot climates is provided with one of these blocks as a part of his outfit.—Hardware.

What He Wanted to Know.

Jack—Will your mother let you go rowing alone?

May—No, but she'll have no objections if you are with me.—Brooklyn Life.

TWO WAYS OF CAPTURING SPONGES.

How the Florida Sponge Seeker Differs From the Diver of the East.

The methods employed in gathering sponges in the Mediterranean and Florida are very different.

In the east divers are employed. The diver is carried down by a broad, flat slab of marble of about 25 pounds weight, which he holds at arm's length in front of him, and which he uses to guide his flight, to protect his head when he first strikes and to keep him down when he walks on the bottom.

Fifteen to twenty fathoms is the average depth, while two minutes is the usual duration of the dive. Each diver puts the sponges he pulls into a net bag that hangs from his neck. When he is ready to ascend, he jerks a rope and is quickly pulled to the surface.

In this country a sponging crew is divided into twos, each pair consisting of a "sculler" and a "hooker," supplied with a small yawlboat known as a dingy. The former stands in the stern of the dingy and sculls it slowly and steadily forward, being prepared to stop it and hold it exactly in place at a moment's notice from the "hooker," who kneeling amidships, with the upper half of his body projecting over the side, scans the bottom for suitable sponges. In order to assist in this scanning a sponge glass is used. It consists of an ordinary wooden bucket with a glass bottom fixed in with putty.

The handle is placed around the neck of the "hooker," while the glass itself is placed flat upon the water, while the "hooker's" head is thrust well down into the bucket. By this means he can see very small objects at a considerable depth, and he has his hands free to plunge the hooked pole down and pierce the sponge, sometimes at a depth of 35 feet, as soon as sighted.

After landing a catch, the sponges are beaten to cleanse them. Afterward they are dipped into a weak solution of lime and sea water to give them the yellow color so well known in the markets.—Cincinnati Tribune.

No Place In Journalism For Old Men.

The most pathetic figure in journalism is the man who has grown old in its service. Through no fault of his, he finds himself without a vocation when he most needs it. In any other business his experience would be of value. The accumulated knowledge of years would command a price commensurate with its worth Here it is valueless, because in the first 10 years of his journalistic career he has mastered the art of reporting, of copy reading, of any routine departmental work, and experience shows that celerity decreases with age after a certain period of years has been reached.

Journalism is essentially a business for young men. They rush into it by hundreds; they remain in it by tens. Ninety per cent of the men who enter journalism leave it before they become old. They remain in it only long enough to make it a stepping stone to something less exacting, less limited in remuneration, less insecure in employment. On the staff of the daily newspaper with which I am connected there is only one man over 50 years of age, and the average age of the employees in the editorial department is less than 35. A canvass of other metropolitan newspaper offices will show but a slight variation from these figures.—J. W. Keller in Forum.

Taking Back a Remark.

An old and popular Irish clergyman had a disagreement with one of his parishioners, a man of great wealth, but vulgar habits and abusive tongue. Upon hearing from a third party that his ancestry had been spoken of disparagingly by this rich boor, the old parson, borrowing a Scriptural metaphor, exclaimed, "Why, sir, my father would not have set him with the dogs of his flock." This remark reached the ears of the nabob, who immediately repaired to the clergyman and demanded an apology. The good old man listened patiently to the ravings of his parishioner and closed the discussion with the remark: "Did I really say that my father would not have set you with his dogs? I was wrong, sir. I believe he would!"—San Francisco Argonaut.

Dying In the Wrong Place.

In the British colony at Lagos an old woman died and was carried to the cemetery. At the grave the body, according to Mohammedan custom, was lifted from the coffin and was about to be buried, when the mourners were startled by hearing it cough several times. On being unwrapped, the corpse sat up and ate some gruel, afterward telling the company that during her state of lifelessness she was mysteriously bidden to seek her native country and die there. This, she added, she meant to do.—London Globe.

An Agricultural Query.

"Mamma," said Freddie, "what's the matter with my feet?"

"I don't know. Perhaps you are getting corns."

Freddie was silent for a time and then remarked:

"Mamma."

"Well, dear."

"After I'm dead and buried do you think they will grow?"—Texas Siftings.

CENTS THAT DROP FROM HEAVEN.

A Little Boy Told a Story Which Sounded Very Much Like an Untruth.

Little Richard M. was a very handsome and very pleasant boy. The house he lived in, in a small city, had no door yard in front of it, but the sidewalk was wide and clean and nicely shaded by elm trees and was not so much crowded with passers. So it was a pleasant and safe place for little Richard to play.

The only objection to it was that people passing by were apt to be so much pleased with the bright faced little fellow that they would take notice of him in a way that might make him vain—so his wise mother thought—and quite often a gentleman passing would give him a cent.

Richard's mother thought that this was not good for him, and so she very plainly told him not to take any more cents if they were offered him. He was to thank any such gentleman for his kindness, but to tell him that his mother did not approve of his taking money from any one.

One day after she had given him his charge little Richard brought in a penny. When his mother saw it, she reproved him for disobeying her. But he answered, "Mamma, there did not any man give me this cent. God threw it down to me out of heaven."

This shocked his mother all the more, for she thought that it must be a lie. She did not see how her little boy could possibly think that he was telling the truth. So she reproved him very solemnly and tried hard to make him see how wicked he had been and to confess his sin. But the little fellow stuck to it, and said over and over again: "There was not any man there. God did throw the cent down to me from heaven."

His mother was greatly distressed and kept trying to get Richard to confess his sin and ask forgiveness. If she could not get him to do this, she thought she must punish him. But before she did so she talked with a young man who studied and slept in the front room on the second floor of her house. He was able and glad to explain the strange thing. He did not know that Richard had been forbidden to take such gifts, and one day sitting at his front window, when the little boy was playing below, he tossed a cent down to him without putting his own head in sight. The cent dropped and jingled on the pavement. Richard looked up and around and saw no person, and he honestly believed what he told his mother.

No doubt she was very thankful to be thus saved from doing cruel wrong to her dear, truthful boy. The mothers who read this will pray God to keep them from doing such a wrong to their children. But, children, dreadful as it would have been for little Richard to be punished for lying, when he had told the real honest truth, it would have been even more dreadful if he had told a lie and deceived his mother. Do you not think so?—Church at Home and Abroad.

Not Practicable Here.

At Copenhagen a young woman who seized a thief and held him until the police came was presented with a diamond brooch and a flattering letter of thanks from the director of police and received an offer of marriage from a well known journalist. Women thief catchers are so numerous in this country that it has been suggested that it would bankrupt the police department to attempt to reward them all, not to mention exhausting the supply of marriageable journalists.—New York Sun.

A Case of Thrift.

Wife—An phwy do yez be takin thim pills when yez are well again?

Husband—Faith, would ye be afther havin me let a dollar's worth of pills go to waste? It's a thriftless family Oi married into, sure.—New York Weekly.

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